

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY COTONOU NIACT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 035388

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UN, IS, US

SUBJECT: BRIEFING WALDHEIM ON MIDDLE EAST

FROM THE SECRETARY

1. IN RESPONSE TO WALDHEIM'S REQUEST FROM WEST AFRICA, RELAYED THROUGH URQUHART, FOR BRIEFING ON FAHMY/SAQQAF TALKS IN WASHINGTON, YOU SHOULD CONVEY FOLLOWING TO URQUHART, STRESSING OUR DESIRE IT BE PASSED TO WALDHEIM VIA SECURE CHANNELS:

A. AS HE HAS IN THE PAST, SECRETARY WANTS TO KEEP SYG INFORMED FOR HIS PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION OF PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS ON MIDDLE EAST AS THEY OCCUR.

B. EGYPTIAN FOREIGN MINISTER FAHMY AND SAUDI MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS SAQQAF WERE CHARGED BY FOUR SECRET

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CHIEFS OF STATE AT MINI-SUMMIT IN ALGIERS TO CONVEY THEIR VIEWS TO PRESIDENT NIXON AND SECRETARY KISSINGER. MAIN THRUST OF MESSAGE THEY CONVEYED WAS THAT ALL FOUR (ALGERIA, EGYPT, SAUDI ARABIA AND SYRIA) ATTACH GREAT IMPORTANCE TO

ACHIEVING SYRIAN-ISRAELI AGREEMENT ON DISENGAGEMENT OF

FORCES. TO THIS END, THEY URGED THAT SECRETARY MAKE EARLY VISIT TO AREA.

C. ON BASIS OF DETAILED DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN TWO FOREIGN MINISTERS AND SECRETARY AND OF MEETING WITH PRESIDENT NIXON AS WELL AS CONCURRENT DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGES WITH SYRIAN AND ISRAELI GOVERNMENTS, WE CONCLUDED THAT OPPORTUNITY TO GET SYRIAN-ISRAELI NEGOTIATING PROCESS STARTED SHOULD BE SEIZED. PRESIDENT ACCORDINGLY INSTRUCTED SECRETARY TO PROCEED TO AREA FOLLOWING HIS RETURN FROM LATIN AMERICAN FOREIGN MINISTERS CONFERENCE IN MEXICO.

D. SECRETARY WILL DEPART MONDAY, FEBRUARY 25, AND WILL VISIT ALL FOUR COUNTRIES WHOSE CHIEFS OF STATE MET IN ALGIERS, AS WELL AS ISRAEL.

E. WE HAVE EXPLAINED CAREFULLY TO ALL CONCERNED, AND BELIEVE THEY FULLY UNDERSTAND, THAT PURPOSE OF THIS TRIP IS TO TRY TO GET SYRIAN-ISRAELI NEGOTIATING PROCESS STARTED AND THAT IT WOULD BE UNREALISTIC TO EXPECT SYRIAN-ISRAELI DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT TO BE CONCLUDED IN THIS SHORT TIMEFRAME. THIS TRIP IS ESSENTIALLY A BEGINNING, AN ATTEMPT TO ESTABLISH A NEGOTIATING FRAMEWORK AND PROCEDURE. IT IS THUS ANALOGOUS TO SECRETARY'S NOVEMBER VISIT WHEN BASIS WAS LAID FOR NEGOTIATING PROCESS THAT LED FROM KM 101 TALKS TO GENEVA MILITARY WORKING GROUP AND ULTIMATELY TO DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT ACHIEVED DURING SECRETARY'S JANUARY VISIT TO AREA.

F. SECRETARY APPRECIATES THAT SYG IS UNDERSTANDABLY INTERESTED IN KNOWING WHAT ROLE UN MIGHT PLAY IN SYRIAN-ISRAELI DISENGAGEMENT TALKS AND UNDER ANY AGREEMENT THAT MAY BE REACHED. IT IS TOO SOON TO BE ABLE TO GIVE ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS, BUT POSSIBILITY OF
SECRET

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TALKS AT SOME POINT IN FRAMEWORK OF EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI MILITARY WORKING GROUP IS NOT EXCLUDED.

2. FOR TEL AVIV: FOREGOING IS FOR AMBASSADOR KEATING'S BACKGROUND. SECRETARY HAS BEEN KEEPING GOI INFORMED THROUGH DINITZ. RUSH
NQUOTE SISCO

SECRET

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